

## Upper Columbia – Salmon Clearwater District

*“Managing our natural landscapes is an enormous task - one that takes a combined effort of permittees, stakeholders, Tribes, interested publics, local communities, and state and national interests. Vegetation management is a centerpiece. A prime example that demonstrates this, and one that we are very proud of, is our fuels management initiative.”*  
*District Manager Fritz Rennebaum*

### Economic and Community Development

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#### *Community Development*

Dave Krosting, Salmon Field Manager, attended a Comprehensive Land Use Planning session at Estes Park, Colorado, along with Lemhi County Commissioners, land use planners, and representatives of the City of Salmon. In the long-term, the Salmon Field Office will assist the County with planning for future growth, as well as protection of open space and the rural characteristics that make Salmon a unique place to live.

#### *Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration*

The BLM has been an active partner in developing the Sacajawea Interpretive and Education Center, a collaborative project with the City of Salmon. In preparation for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial commemoration, the Salmon Field Office has agreed to assist the City with interpretive and directional signing, interpretive kiosks, a downtown History Park, and the Sacajawea Center. The Salmon Field Office has also helped local schools interpret Lewis and Clark history. The BLM sponsored a workshop through the Sawtooth Science Institute where 22 teachers earned credits while developing an interpretive curriculum for future classroom use. BLM staff also led field trips for students to learn about important historic sites and resources along segments of the National Historic Trail.

#### *Ski Area Expansion*

The Coeur d’Alene Field Office accepted a right-of-way application from Eagle Crest Developments, owner of Silver Mountain Ski Area, to expand their existing ski area across public land. Silver Mountain is a large employer in the Silver Valley, which was plunged into economic

attraction to an area that is trying to move its economic base from mining to one that is more tourism oriented. The expansion of Silver Mountain is Governor Dirk Kempthorne's top economic priority for the State of Idaho. The Field Office is working diligently with the resort to accommodate their expansion plans, promote the local economy, and protect resource values.

## Lands and Realty Program

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### *Spirit/Twin Lakes Omitted Lands Bill*

At the request of Kootenai County, the Coeur d'Alene Field Office investigated a survey problem that has evidently existed since 1880, when a General Land Office contract surveyor misrepresented the shoreline of Spirit and Twin Lakes north of Coeur d'Alene. The surveyed meander line of these lakes is up to one-half mile away from the actual shoreline. These lakes are heavily subdivided and contain hundreds of residences on land potentially owned by the BLM. To resolve the situation, the Field Office worked with Idaho Senators Craig and Crapo, and Congressman Otter to draft special legislation that would allow the BLM to survey the lakes correctly and issue a quit-claim deed or "disclaimer of interest" on the subject land without going through the normal administrative procedures, which would be cost- and time-prohibitive. The bill has passed Congress and received Presidential signature.

### *Rayonier Land Exchange*

In FY 2002, the Coeur d'Alene Field Office completed a land exchange with Rayonier, Inc., a timber corporation based in Oregon, to acquire 160 acres of private property in the Pine Creek drainage. The private property acquired in this exchange contains over a mile of riparian habitat along the West Fork of Pine Creek and is important westslope cutthroat trout habitat. It also provides important access to other public lands in the area. The exchange was accomplished without controversy or protest from any interest group or the public at large.

### *Acquisitions along the Lewis and Clark Trail*

In FY 2002, a private landowner donated 40 acres of land containing the Pirimids [sic.], a site along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (NHT) that is mentioned in Clark's field notes. The Salmon Field Office also has an opportunity to use Land and Water Conservation Fund monies to purchase a conservation easement or fee simple title to a portion of the NHT near Agency Creek. Acquisition of these areas will allow BLM to provide public access; expand recreational, educational, and interpretive opportunities; and protect the natural, cultural, and traditional resources within the acquired segments of the NHT corridor.

## National Fire Plan and Healthy Forests Initiative

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### *Fire Use Planning*

The Salmon Field Office completed an Interdisciplinary Activity Plan for Fire Management with the help of North Wind Environmental, a local contractor. The activity plan recommends areas for potential prescribed fire, mechanical fuels treatment, noxious weed control, wildland fire for resource benefits, and timber harvest to reduce hazardous fuels and achieve other objectives of the National Fire Plan. The information in the activity plan will be used to develop a Fire Management Plan in FY 2003.

The Cottonwood Field Office is also preparing an Interdisciplinary Activity Plan for fire management under a cooperatively developed assistance agreement. The plan is being developed with input from State and federal agencies, special interest groups, and concerned citizens. The plan will identify opportunities and priorities for vegetation treatments through use of wildland fire use for resource benefits, prescribed fire, suppression activities, and mechanical, chemical, and biological control of hazardous fuels. The plan will also specify a monitoring and evaluation process so the future effects of implementing the proposed treatments can be assessed.

### *Fuels Reduction/Healthy Forests*

The Coeur d'Alene Field Office is helping the five northern counties of Idaho develop and complete Risk Assessments and Mitigation plans. Kootenai County has developed a Statewide pilot project known as "Fire Smart," while Shoshone County is eagerly implementing fuel reduction projects within the wildland-urban interface. These local government cooperative partnerships, which the BLM is working hard to foster and expand, are further complemented by fuels reduction efforts on adjacent BLM-administered land. Coeur d'Alene Field Office staff used prescribed fire and mechanical methods to reduce fuels on more than 1,000 acres of very complex forested vegetative communities, and accomplished inventory efforts on another 1,100 acres. Through the "Healthy Forest Initiative" concept, about 2.5 MMBF of timber are being harvested annually on an average of 8 to 12 individual timber sales. These fuel reduction efforts are concentrated in the wildland-urban interface and contribute to the local timber economy. The Field Office continues to meld a three-part fuels reduction approach (planning, inventory, and project implementation) and the resource protection and improvement of healthy forests into a partnership aimed at promoting the safety and viability of local communities.

## *Forest Fuels Treatments*

The Cottonwood Field Office is designing and implementing vegetation treatment projects to improve forest health, reduce the risk of high intensity wildfire, and improve wildlife habitat. Objectives in the Whiskey South project are to harvest timber in stands with insect and disease concerns to reduce the risk of stand replacing fire; design prescribed fire and mechanical treatments to reduce the risk of high intensity wildland fire impacts to life, property, and natural resources in the Elk City area; and use prescribed fire to reduce conifer encroachment and improve forage palatability on important elk winter range. The Wet Gulch project, cooperatively developed through an assistance agreement, is designed to reduce existing fuel continuity and patterns, help return the area to a non-lethal fire regime, produce early seral forest habitats, and regenerate vigorous forest stands.

## *Interagency Cooperation in Fire Management*

The Coeur d'Alene Field Office operates under a Statewide Cooperative Agreement among the Idaho Department of Lands, U.S. Forest Service, and BLM for shared wildfire suppression based on the location of ownership. Although the Idaho Department of Lands and the Forest Service have suppression responsibility for BLM lands in the Coeur d'Alene Field Office area, the BLM enthusiastically assists these two agencies with this duty. Furthermore, all three agencies collaborate on implementing prescribed fire projects to address the overwhelming fuels management initiative by sharing equipment, personnel, and expertise to stretch shrinking budgets.

## *County Fire Risk Assessment and Mitigation*

The Cottonwood Field Office is working with State and federal agencies, city and county governments, Tribes, ranchers, and concerned citizen groups to identify current and future community fire protection issues and needs in Nez Perce, Latah, Clearwater, Idaho, and Lewis counties. The desired end product is a county-wide assessment and mitigation plan that will address numerous factors such as wildland fuel loads; topographical risks; fire severity; response times and assistance availability; training and experience; equipment status and access; fire prevention attitudes or perceptions; community infrastructure; adjoining protection area assistance; and evaluation of wildland fuels and fuels management programs for adjoining lands.

## *Community Assistance Projects*

The Cottonwood Field Office is working alongside local cooperators to develop projects that will reduce the risks of wildfire to communities and natural resources. The projects will improve local wildland fire management capability through planning, homeowner education, and implementation and monitoring of hazardous fuels reduction activities on federal and non-federal land. Fire/fuels projects will address fire risk concerns in the wildland-urban interface and will enhance local and small business employment opportunities for rural communities. The treatments will also recognize and incorporate the BLM's mission to maintain and enhance the health, productivity, and biological diversity of watershed ecosystems.

## *Cooperative Forest Management*

The Cottonwood Field Office has had the opportunity to work toward appropriate forest management with adjacent landowners. Through an Interagency Agreement, foresters from the Field Office designed, developed, and implemented a management plan for 1,300 acres of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE)-managed lands. The project will utilize timber harvest and prescribed burning to improve ungulate winter forage on critical winter range; reduce fuel load, pattern, and continuity on lands that are classified as Wildland-Urban Interface; and maintain the scenic vista for recreationists using Dworshak Reservoir. The project also led to a Project Agreement between the COE, Idaho Department of Lands, and Potlatch Corporation to coordinate their management activities in the project area, allowing a coordinated prescribed burn effort that will result in over 2,000 acres of improved winter range. Our BLM employees completed the project layout, marked areas for prescriptive management, determined values, and completed the advertisement and sale of the timber sale contract.

The Cottonwood Field Office continues to participate in the Inland Empire Tree Improvement Cooperative. The BLM maintains a 12-acre ponderosa pine seed orchard containing stands of trees that have been propagated for production of genetically superior seed. Annually, these trees are tested for some aspect of productivity, such as pollen and seed production, growth, or resistance to disease. Cones are harvested, and the seed is extracted and distributed appropriately among Co-op members.

## Tribal Relations

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### *Employment Opportunities for Tribes*

The Salmon Field Office is working with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes to establish Tribal employment opportunities in the Salmon area. The BLM hired Tribal fire crews to work on forest restoration projects in the spring and fall of 2002. This partnership enabled the crews to gain experience and employment outside of the wildland fire season and helped the BLM accomplish vital project work. The Salmon Field Office is also exploring ways to involve the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes in Lewis and Clark Bicentennial activities.

### *Collaborative Resource Management*

The Coeur d'Alene Field Office continues to work on improving government-to-government relations with the Coeur d'Alene and Kootenai Tribes. The Field Office is involved in the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's "Integrated Resource Management Plan" development, and has initiated meetings between BLM and Coeur d'Alene Tribe biologists to address common concerns about BLM management actions within the Tribe's aboriginal boundaries. The BLM is a member of the Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative Committee, which also includes the Kootenai Tribe, Boundary County, and the City of Bonner's Ferry. The Committee's purpose is to develop partnerships and a collaborative approach that focuses on resource issues affecting this geographic region.

## Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Projects

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### *Recreation Site Development*

The Salmon Field Office is preparing for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial by developing or upgrading BLM recreation sites associated with the Lewis and Clark Trail:

- The Sharkey Hot Springs Recreation Site, a natural hot springs adjacent to the Lewis and Clark Trail, has been revived with the installation of two large soaking pools, changing rooms, restrooms, a fire pit, picnic tables, and barbecue stands.
- Tower Rock Recreation Site, located on the Salmon River where Clark's reconnaissance party camped on August 21 and 25, 1805, is in the process of being completely remodeled with new roads, interpretive signs, a boat ramp, restrooms, landscaping, and paved RV campsites. A grant from the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation provided funding to pave the recreation site.

- Tower Creek Pimids [sic], a 40-acre parcel with unique rock formations noted in Clark's field notes, is being developed as a picnic area. A private landowner donated the parcel to the BLM in 2002.
- Improvements have been made to the Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway and Adventure Road kiosk near Salmon.
- Planning is underway to develop several other sites, including the Discovery Hill area on the bluffs above the Salmon River just north of Salmon, a trail to access the First Flag Unfurling site, and a "History Park" on a small lot in downtown Salmon.
- The Cottonwood Field Office designed and will be installing Lewis and Clark interpretive signs at the Pink House Recreation Site.

### *Interpretation of the Lewis and Clark Trail*

The Salmon Field Office has initiated several projects to provide interpretive services for local residents and visitors to appreciate the Corps of Discovery's journey through Lemhi County.

- *Sacajawea Interpretive and Educational Center.* The BLM recently entered into an agreement with the City of Salmon to help fund trail construction, interpretive kiosks, administrative costs, and labor at the new center. The BLM will use the opportunity to promote user ethics on public lands.
- *Interpretive Signs and Brochures.* Through partnerships with the City of Salmon, Lemhi County, and the Lemhi County Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Committee, the Salmon Field Office has helped develop several interpretive brochures and is developing interpretive signs for placement along the Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway and Adventure Road, along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and in local recreation sites.
- *Tendoy Portal.* The BLM has entered into a partnership agreement with the owners of the general store at Tendoy, Idaho. This store serves as the "gateway" to the Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway and Adventure Road and the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, a component of the National Landscape Conservation System. The store will provide visitor information and space for interpretive signs and restrooms during the Bicentennial.
- *Park Rangers.* Two park rangers hired by the Salmon Field Office provided information to the public along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail at Lemhi Pass, at the new Sacajawea Interpretive and Education Center, and during presentations to school children and teachers.
- *Trail System Planned.* The Salmon Field Office is defining a trail system that would link the Sacajawea Interpretive and Education Center to public land east of Salmon and to a greenbelt along the Lemhi and Salmon rivers.

## Recreation Program

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### *Acquisition of New Recreation Site*

The Blackwell Island Recreation Site, the newest boat launching facility in Coeur d'Alene, is nearing completion. The 10-year cooperative partnership to alleviate boat launch crowding and congestion on the north end of Coeur d'Alene Lake is on schedule for a May 2003 opening. A decade ago local governments sought assistance from the BLM to purchase suitable land for a boat launch development. In 1994, the BLM used Land and Water Conservation Fund monies to purchase 32 acres on Blackwell Island for \$1.25 million. Kootenai County contributed 10 percent of the funding for the land purchase, and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, through the Waterways Improvement Fund, contributed \$520,000 towards construction of the \$2 million facility. The City of Coeur d'Alene annexed a portion of the property in order to provide city sewer and water services to the development.

The Blackwell Island Recreation Site is located adjacent to Highway 95 on the Spokane River, a short distance from Coeur d'Alene Lake. The urban-modern design will accommodate high levels of visitor use. The recreation site will be seasonally operated and provide day-use boating, picnicking, and hiking opportunities. Four launch lanes, parking to accommodate 164 vehicles, and 500 linear feet of moorage docks will facilitate day-use boating. Fourteen picnic units and a group picnic shelter provide attractive picnicking facilities. Elevated boardwalks and viewing decks optimize hiking and wildlife viewing opportunities through the wetlands bordering the Spokane River. Preserving wildlife habitat and watchable wildlife opportunities was one of the objectives of the original acquisition. The Blackwell Island Recreation Site will truly constitute a flagship recreation development within the Bureau.

## Water Quality Restoration

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The Lemhi Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan is being followed by the Salmon Field Office in order to protect water quality and restore aquatic habitat. In this third year of implementation, Clean Water Action Plan Funding was allocated for project work such as road relocation, stream enclosures, water quality monitoring, and livestock grazing management changes. Projects are also restoring habitat for three fish species that are federally listed as threatened: Chinook salmon, steelhead, and bull trout.



## *West Fork of Pine Creek Road Reconstruction*

The Coeur d'Alene Field Office continues to reconstruct this eight-mile road, which was damaged by floods during FY 1997. A unique and creative partnership with Crown Pacific Timber Company will save over \$100,000 in construction costs as the company continues with reconstruction of the road. In recognition of this newly developed access route, local private landowners, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and the BLM are collaborating on developing a joint access management plan for the West Fork of Pine Creek Basin. The plan will be responsive to preserving historical public use; protecting big game populations; improving water quality and fisheries habitat through stream restoration efforts; and retaining the back country aspects of this beautiful drainage.

## Noxious Weed Control

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Noxious weed management is a win-win opportunity for the BLM. The State of Idaho's Strategic Plan for Managing Noxious Weeds promotes locally-based Weed Management Areas (WMAs). All Field Offices are actively participating in these groups to develop and implement weed management strategies at the local level.

### *The Salmon Field Office*

The Salmon Field Office implemented noxious weed control activities on more than 700 acres in FY 2002, including biological, mechanical, and herbicide treatments. The BLM completed annual inventory and control of noxious weeds as a partner in the Lemhi Cooperative Weed Management Area and provided public information/education on noxious weeds throughout the year, including a booth at the Lemhi County Fair. The BLM's weed management Assistance Agreement with Lemhi County is funded through FY 2003.

The Lemhi County Cooperative Weed Management Area goat grazing project continued for the second year. This leafy spurge treatment is being used as part of an integrated management strategy to reduce and contain an estimated 600 acres of leafy spurge on public and private lands within the Carmen and Kirtley Creek drainages just north of Salmon. The goats were allowed to graze the 600 acres they used last year, as well as other previously untreated areas. The success of this grazing program has been dramatic. The goats remove the thick and decadent stands of spurge; the spurge responds by growing fresh new stems that the flea beetles need and prefer for a food supply as they emerge as adults in early summer. This treatment helps provide

breed, expand, and complete their life cycles, and it created a population explosion of the already established, but sparse, flea beetles. This was the first year in a 10-year insect release history that flea beetle population levels were abundant enough to collect beetles from this area and move them to other areas. It was also the first year the spurge was visibly affected by the beetles.

### *The Coeur d'Alene Field Office*

The Coeur d'Alene Field Office completed over 800 acres of noxious weed control activities in FY 2002 using mechanical and herbicide treatments. Successful releases and reproducing populations of spotted knapweed biological control agents were also identified on an additional 100 acres. The BLM remains an active partner in the Inland Empire Cooperative Weed Management Area by serving on the executive and steering committees. The Coeur d'Alene Field Office coordinated and participated with other Inland Empire Cooperative Weed Management Area members in a spotted knapweed and dalmation toad flax eradication project on Tubbs Hill, a very popular hiking trail and natural area on Lake Coeur d'Alene. The Coeur d'Alene Field Office also provided public information and education on noxious weeds and control measures at the Kootenai County Fair.

### *The Cottonwood Field Office*

The Cottonwood Field Office is currently participating in four Weed Management Areas (WMAs): Tri-State, Salmon River, Clearwater Basin, and Joseph Plains. A BLM Cottonwood employee is chairing the Tri-State WMA, which, as the name suggests, encompasses portions of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho in the lower Hells Canyon area south of Lewiston, Idaho. This WMA has developed working relationships between private, State, federal, and Tribal cooperators that allow the exchange of ideas and work, resulting in increased productivity. During the summer, Tri-State hosted a tour for congressional participants and others following Senator Craig's field hearing on noxious weeds held in Lewiston. Other educational efforts include two public radio broadcasts on noxious weeds; interviews and location for filming of "Plant's Out of Place II" that will air on CNBC; two Student Conservation Association interns working on weed education and awareness for adults and students; and a cooperative herbicide calibration and safety training for over 30 seasonal employees. Other successful weed management efforts within the Cottonwood Field Office area WMAs included:

- Stopping the upriver spread of yellow starthistle at Slate Creek. This effort is successful due to the active participation of private landowners at the front of the yellow starthistle invasion.

- Prescriptive use of goats and cattle in revegetation efforts on steep slopes where equipment cannot be used.
- Prescriptive use of livestock at various times of year to compliment other weed management activities such as herbicides and biological control.
- Establishment of nursery areas for wide-scale redistribution of five yellow starthistle biological controls, in cooperation with the Nez Perce Tribe Biocontrol Center and numerous other cooperators.
- Revegetation trials using numerous seed mixes, site preparation techniques, and prescribed fire.
- Research efforts, including the impact of weeds on Spalding's Silene, an endangered plant; the effect of fire on weed populations within plant communities in various conditions of health; the recovery of cryptogammic crusts post-fire; and the effect of crust recovery on weed spread.
- Targeting new weed invaders through a cooperative weed control "Swat" team whose members are paid, housed, and provided supplies through contributions from the various cooperators.
- Acquisition and interpretation of high resolution satellite imagery for remote sensing of weeds in the topographically challenging Hells Canyon area.

## Outsourcing (Contracting)

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In FY 2002, the Salmon Field Office contracted work to meet National Fire Plan commitments, including inventories for fuels, noxious weeds, aspen stands, threatened and endangered species, and cultural resources. The BLM also developed Assistance Agreements with Lemhi County and the City of Salmon for Lewis and Clark interpretation, visitor services, and Comprehensive Land Use Planning.

### *Salmon*

The District continues to support the "Service First" initiative and has collocated the Salmon Office with the Salmon-Challis National Forest. The collocation has provided shared facilities such as an interagency fire center and shared reception area, and it has enhanced interagency cooperation in noxious weed control, livestock grazing, fisheries biology, and other disciplines.

## *Coeur d'Alene*

Since the current leases for the Coeur d'Alene BLM Office and the Supervisor's Office of the Panhandle National Forest will expire in 2006 and 2004, respectively, efforts are beginning now to collocate these offices. Collocating both agencies in the same facility will enable use of shared space (reception area, conference rooms, break rooms, restrooms, etc.) and reduce leasing costs. It will also provide even greater opportunities for employees to coordinate projects and other land management efforts and to better serve the public. Already, the two agencies are sharing equipment and scarce skills through an informal agreement to eliminate cross-billing and to retain the most effective use of public dollars.

## *Challis Field Office*

The Challis Field Office has moved into a newly constructed building located at the intersection of Highway 93 South and Blue Mountain Road in Challis, Idaho. The new facility provides the space needed for all of the Challis staff to be in the same building. The Challis Field Office initiated its relocation from Salmon to Challis three years ago, when the BLM began to station newly hired staff in Challis, instead of Salmon. The Challis-based workforce has grown from one person to nineteen.

## Wildlife and Fisheries

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### *Wildlife Populations Monitoring*

The Salmon Field Office continues to work with partners to monitor wildlife populations in Lemhi County, while increasing understanding of the species habitat needs.

- *Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) Stations.* The Salmon Field Office continues to run one of the few MAPS stations in Idaho, in conjunction with the Salmon-Challis National Forest and Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Birds have been captured and leg-banded and data has been collected on them for the past four years at a site on Pattee Creek. The purpose is to gain knowledge about the productivity and survivorship of neo-tropical migratory birds. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game also helped the Salmon Field Office complete breeding bird surveys on many streams managed by the Field Office.

- *Sage grouse lek counts.* Sage grouse lek counts are conducted each spring with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to provide information on long-term population trends. Radio collars are also being used to help determine the areas sage grouse use during different seasons. This information, along with habitat condition surveys, will help the BLM better manage for the species.
- *Bull Trout Habitat Research.* The Salmon Field Office continues to work with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to survey and monitor fish populations in Lemhi County. Through the Challenge Cost Share program, the BLM is joining the Idaho Department of Fish and Game in sponsoring an Idaho State University graduate student's research on bull trout. The data gathered during the next two years will provide information on the long-term health requirements for the studied population.

### *Eagle Watch Week*

The Coeur d'Alene Field Office completed its tenth annual "Eagle Watch Week." This event is held during the week between Christmas and New Year's when bald eagles migrate into Wolf Lodge Bay and the surrounding areas of Lake Coeur d'Alene. Easy access to I-90 makes this watchable wildlife viewing opportunity an extremely popular event with the public. The BLM is the host agency for this multi-agency event that includes the U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and plenty of volunteers. The local schools take advantage of this opportunity to provide field learning experiences for students of all ages. Almost 5,000 people from all over the nation attended the session this past year.

### Wild Horse and Burro Program

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The UCSC District held two successful adoptions this year, one in Sandpoint in July and one at the new BLM corral facility near Challis in September. The Challis adoption included 75 Idaho wild horses from the Challis Herd Management Area and 15 burros from southwestern states. Horse trainer Mario Johnson held demonstration clinics during both events.

## Mining Restoration and Minerals Exploration

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### *Coeur d'Alene Basin Restoration*

Coeur d'Alene Field Office staff along with other Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, and Tribal staffs (termed Trustees by regulation) have continued to provide extensive technical documentation and support to a massive Natural Resource and Damage Assessment (NRDA) process for the Coeur d'Alene Basin. This has included assessing and quantifying mine-related injuries, developing plans for cleanup and restoration of the Basin's natural resources, and cooperating with our Trustees and the Department of Justice in a NRDA lawsuit against potentially responsible mining companies. The BLM continues to conduct remedial and restoration activities, including abandoned mine closures; extensive stream and riparian restoration; and general removal, regarding, and erosion stability efforts on old rock dumps and tailings piles on Basin public lands.

At the same time, Coeur d'Alene Field Office staff are participating in implementation of the Environmental Protection Agency's remedial plan for the Basin, finalized in a September 2002 Record of Decision (ROD). The plan provides for a \$359 million remedy over a 30-year time frame. This includes participating with the Basin Environmental Improvement Commission, established by the State of Idaho to coordinate public and other stakeholder input toward implementation of the ROD.

### *Abandoned Mine Inventories*

The Salmon Field Office has more than 1,000 known abandoned mine sites, some with both water quality and physical safety hazard issues. Approximately 140 of these sites have been fully investigated during the last three years, with about 50 investigations conducted annually by the current Abandoned Mine Land staff.

### *Thorium Deposits*

A significant resource of thorium is located in the Salmon Field Office area near Lemhi Pass, where over 1,000 mining claims have been active in the past. A joint research project recently conducted by the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) shows promise in using thorium for nuclear energy production. Recent claim staking in the Lemhi Pass area over known thorium mineralization cannot be overlooked as an indication of probable future exploration and possible production of thorium.